

POSSIBLE RETURN OF BIKINI NATIVES

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April 7, 1952

Letter to Mr. Dean from James P. Davis, Director Office of Territories, Department of Interior

Enclosed a letter to Davis from McConnell, Deputy Commissioner, Pacific Trust Territories pointing out the need for something to be done for the Bikini natives now living on Kili. Fishing is poor, poor harbor facilities and general conditions are poor. The letter asks:

1. Can natives be returned to Bikini?
2. How can the situation be improved?

Davis advised that he would discuss the matter with the Bureau (Mr. Boyer) and the Bureau would be glad to discuss the matter for him to take during the meeting.

April 9, 1952

Memorandum to Mr. Dean from Mr. Boyer
Recommends that no assurance be given that natives can ever return to Bikini because:

1. AEC may need Bikini if Eniwetok goes up with
2. Or contamination may be so bad we cannot use Eniwetok for a long time.

Biology & Medicine states no radioactive hazards at Bikini that would harm natives if they were returned but Mr. Boyer recommends that this information should not be volunteered since there is some doubt on the basis which it would want to prevent return of natives. Another source states that the AEC is not glad to have the natives return to Bikini since they are glad to have the natives return to Bikini.

April 17, 1952

Memorandum to Mr. Dean from Mr. Boyer
States that he was visited by Thomas Lewis and they discuss the matter. Mr. Dean told them that we would have to secure additional information on radioactive hazards at Bikini since last survey was made in 1951. He told them that AEC might still have to use Bikini.

FROM NMB-
MILITARY RESEARCH & APPL.

RETURNED TO
AUTHORITY:
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FROM
AEC - N

Davis asked two things:

1. Have a recheck made on radioactivity at Bikini and if safe,
2. Consider another island for test use.

Mr. Dean said that Thomas and Davis would be to survey the trust islands to find one meeting the specifications.

(Note on page 10 of report made for Mr. Dean...)

April 24, 1952

Note to Colonel Schottler from Colonel Sturgeon. Sturgeon discussed matter with Sady, Department of the Interior who stated that Honolulu Office of Interior has information on suitable islands and atolls as to their present status.

(Colonel Schottler notes: After above information available, it was decided that the Pacific Operations Office unincorporated islands will serve as an alternative to Bikini.)

May 2, 1952

Note to Sturgeon from Hughes. Conference held with Sturgeon, Hughes, and others regarding the matter of alternative islands.

Following actions seem necessary:

1. Get Biology & Medicine to state final position, as soon as possible to whether Bikini is safe for the natives to return and if not, how long.
2. Assuming Bikini safe, SFO-AEC must determine whether Bikini is suitable as test site.
3. Assuming we can get along without Bikini, SFO-AEC must select island from the list to be submitted by the Department of the Interior.
4. Question of money to pay for another island for the natives to be resolved if we decide to leave Bikini.